



RAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR LEAVES AND GRASS CLIPPINGS

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

You Choose - your leaves and grass clippings can be a valuable resource OR a source of water pollution.

As a resource . . .

Mulched leaves or grass clippings on your lawn add valuable nutrients and organic matter. Grass clippings provide a source of slow-release nutrients reducing the amount of fertilizer needed to none or at least half. A thin layer of mulched leaves will break down and add much needed organic matter.

Composting leaves and grass clippings saves money.

Compost is natural recycling. Compost soil can be used as a top dressing on your lawn or garden beds reducing or eliminating the need for fertilizer and mulch.

As a source of water pollution . . .

Decaying leaves and grass can negatively impact aquatic creatures and organisms in water bodies. As organic matter decomposes in the streambeds and use up oxygen that other organisms such as dragonfly larvae, crabs, and fish need to live.

Yard waste on stream banks smothers natural vegetation.

Leaves or grass dumped on the shoreline block sunlight and smother the natural plant life that provide food and cover to animals such as turtles, ducks, chipmunks, and deer.

Yard waste near water bodies releases nutrients causing increased algae and odors. Nutrients in yard waste placed near water ways will slowly make their way into the water stimulating algae growth and other nuisance weeds that form foul-smelling, green mats on the water surface and degrade water quality.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Remove the bag from your lawnmower or use a mulching lawnmower to add nutrients to your lawn and to avoid having to dispose of the grass clippings. This will also reduce the need for fertilizers.

NEVER dispose of leaves or clippings in or near storm drains, drainage channels (where water drains rain or melting snow), wetlands or water bodies!

Put yard waste on the curb in a paper bag or reusable, clearly marked "Yard Waste" container to be picked up by DPW staff. Brush must be cut into lengths not exceeding 4 feet, contain no pieces greater than 5 inches diameter, and be tied in bundles not exceeding 1 foot in diameter and 50 pounds total.

Drop off your yard waste to be composted at the City's Recycling Center located at 680 Peverly Hill Road.

Start backyard composting (away from surface waters). See "how-to" brochure.

www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/waste/swrtas/documents/compost_flier.pdf

SPREAD THE MESSAGE

Portsmouth cares about clean water and pollution prevention. We are sending this flyer out to help improve water quality in our local waterways. This outreach message also helps our community meet US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements to share pollution prevention information with our residents.

Yard waste dumped in or near streams is also against the law!

In an effort to protect wetlands and surface waters, the NH legislature passed a law that prohibits filling streams and wetlands with waste materials, including yard waste. RSA 482-A:3

SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING FACILITY INFORMATION

RECYCLING CENTER LOCATION:

Portsmouth Department of Public Works
680 Peverly Hill Road
Portsmouth, NH 03824
(603) 427-1530

RECYCLING CENTER HOURS:

Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday 7:45AM - 3:15PM
Saturday 8:00AM - 2:00PM

extended hours from July 1st to Columbus Day

Tuesday 7:45AM - 6:15PM

www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/solid-waste-recycling/portsmouth-recycling-center

City of Portsmouth
Department of Public Works
Stormwater Division
680 Peverly Hill Rd
Portsmouth, NH 03801

STORMWATER PROGRAM CONTACTS



NH Department of Environmental Services

(603) 271-7889 or (603) 271-1352

Deborah.Loiselle@des.nh.gov

www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/was/index.htm



City of Portsmouth
Department of Public Works

www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks



Stormwater Division

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